

Appln No. 10/647,096
Amdt date April 13, 2006
Reply to Office action of November 16, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancel)
2. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim [[1]] 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~
expanding or narrowing step comprises expanding a rim of the ~~cylindrical~~ tubular body.
3. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim [[1]] 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~
expanding or narrowing step comprises expanding a section of the body adjacent to the first rim
with the expansion commencing at the first end.
4. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim [[1]] 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~
expanding or narrowing step comprises narrowing a rim of the ~~cylindrical~~ tubular body.
5. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim [[1]] 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~
expanding or narrowing step comprises narrowing a section of the body adjacent to the first rim
with the expansion commencing at the first end.
6. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim [[1]] 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~
expanding or narrowing step comprises expanding the first rim of the ~~cylindrical~~ tubular body
and narrowing the second rim of the ~~cylindrical~~ tubular body.
7. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim [[1]] 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~
expanding or narrowing step comprises expanding a first section of the body adjacent to the first
rim with the expansion commencing at the first end and narrowing a second section of the body
adjacent to the second rim with the expansion commencing at the second end.

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8. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~ expanding or narrowing step comprises expanding a first section of the body adjacent to the first rim with the expansion commencing at the first end and expanding a second section of the body adjacent to the second rim with the expansion commencing at the second end.

9. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~ expanding or narrowing step comprises narrowing a first section of the body adjacent to the first rim with the expansion commencing at the first end and narrowing a second section of the body adjacent to the second rim with the expansion commencing at the second end.

10. (Withdrawn) ~~[[A]]~~ The method according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 34, further comprising shaping ~~[[the]]~~ a cross-section of the first rim to differ from ~~[[the]]~~ a cross-section of the second rim.

11. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~ expanding or narrowing step comprises expanding a first section of the body by pushing-in a mandrel.

12. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 34, wherein the ~~modifying~~ expanding or narrowing step comprises expanding a first section of the body by pushing the first end into a hollow die.

Claims 13-26 (Cancel)

27. (Currently Amended) ~~The spacer of claim 26, A spacer for bone defects~~ comprising a tubular body having a first end, a first rim at the first end, a second end, a second rim at the second end, a longitudinal axis, an unthreaded jacket wall extending in the direction of said longitudinal axis from said first rim to said second rim, said jacket wall having a first body section adjacent the first rim and a second body section adjacent the second rim, wherein said first body section has a tapered shape, wherein the jacket wall comprises a plurality of recesses.

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28. (Previously Presented) The spacer of claim 27, wherein the recesses are rhomboid shaped recesses.

29. (Previously Presented) The spacer of claim [[27]] 28, wherein the rhomboid-shaped recesses are arranged in groups such that the recesses in a group are adjacent to each other in the direction of the circumference.

30. (Previously Presented) The spacer according to claim 29, wherein the jacket wall comprises the shape of a rhomboid lattice.

31. (Currently Amended) The spacer of claim [[26]] 27, wherein ~~a plane tangent to said tapered section forms an angle with the longitudinal axis that~~ the tapered shape diverges from the longitudinal axis in a direction of the first end.

32. (Currently Amended) The spacer of claim [[26]] 27, wherein ~~the tapered shape a plane tangent to said tapered section an angle with the longitudinal axis that~~ converges toward the longitudinal axis in a direction of the first end.

33. (Currently Amended) The spacer according to claim [[13]] 27, wherein said second body section has a tapered shape and wherein the tapered shape of the first body section a plane tangent to said tapered section forms an angle with the longitudinal axis that diverges from the longitudinal axis in a direction of the first end and wherein the tapered shape of the second body section a second plane, which is tangent to said second body section, intersects the longitudinal axis, the second tangent plane forming an angle with the longitudinal axis that converges toward the longitudinal axis in a direction of the first end.

34. (Currently Amended) A method for connecting two bone parts, the method comprising:

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providing a length of tubular spacer sufficient to connect the bone parts, the spacer comprising a tubular body having a first end, a first rim at the first end, a second end, a second rim at the second end, a longitudinal axis, a jacket wall extending in the direction of said longitudinal axis from said first rim to said second rim, said jacket wall having a first body section adjacent the first rim and a second body section adjacent the second rim, wherein said first body section is tapered;

inserting the length of tubular spacer between the bone parts to be connected; and

applying a compression force to the tubular spacer positioned between the two bone parts

wherein the step of providing a length of tubular spacer comprises:

providing cylindrical tubular jacket material;

cutting the cylindrical tubular jacket material to said length; and

expanding or narrowing at least one of the first and second ends of the tubular spacer to adjust to the bone parts being connected.

35. (Cancel)

36. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 34, comprising a step of ~~filling~~ filling the spacer with bone chips or artificial material.